An Arrow

AGAINST

Profane and Promiſcuous

DANCING

Drawn out of the Quiver of the

SCRIPTURES.

By the Miniſters of Chriſt at Boſton *in* New-England.

Judg. 6. 31. *Will you plead for Baal? Let him plead for himſelf.*

Chorea eſt Circulus cujus Centrum eſt Diabolus. Gulielm: Pariſienſis.

Boſton, *Printed by* Samuel Green, and are to be Sold by *Joſeph Brunning*.

1684

An Arrow againſt Mixt DANCING.

CConcerning the Controverſy about *Dancing*, the Queſtion is not, whether all *Dancing* be in it ſelf ſinful. It is granted, that *Pyrrhical* or *Polemical Saltation*: i. e. when men vault in their Armour, to ſhew their ſtrength and activity, may be of uſe. Nor is the queſtion, whether a ſober and grave *Dancing* of Men with Men, or of Women with Women, be not allowable; we make no doubt of that, where it may be done without offence, in due ſeaſon, and with moderation. The Prince of Philoſophers has obſerved truly, that *Dancing* or *Leaping*, is a natural expreſſion of joy: So that there is no more Sin in it, than in laughter, or any outward expreſſion of inward Rejoycing.

But our queſtion is concernig *Gynecandri-*

cal Dancing, or that which is commonly called *Mixt* or *Promiſcuous Dancing*, *viz.* of Men and Women (be they elder or younger perſons) together: Now this we affirm to be utterly unlawful, and that it cannot be tollerated in ſuch a place as *New-England*, without great Sin. And that it may appear, that we are not tranſported by *Affection* without Judgment, let the following Arguments be weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

Arg. 1. *That which the Scripture condemns is ſinful.* None but Atheiſts will deny this *Propoſition*: But the Scripture condemns *Promiſcuous Dancing*. This *Aſſumption* is proved, 1. *From the Seventh Commandment.* It is an Eternal Truth to be obſerved in expounding the Commandments, that whenever any ſin is forbidden, not only the higheſt acts of that ſin, but all degrees thereof, and all occaſions leading thereto are prohibited. Now we cannot find one Orthodox and Judicious Divine, that writeth on the Commandments, but mentions *Promiſcuous Dancing*, as a breach of the ſeventh Commandment, as being

being an occaſion, and an incentive to that which is evil in the ſight of God. Yea, this is ſo manifeſt as that the *Aſſembly* in the *larger Catechiſm*, do expreſly take notice of *Dancings*, as a violation of the Commandments. It is ſad, that when in times of Reformation, Children have been taught in their Cotechiſm, that ſuch *Dancing* is againſt the Commandment of God, that now in *New-England* they ſhould practically be learned the contrary. The unchaſt Touches and Geſticulations uſed by *Dancers*, have a palpable tendency to that which is evil. Whereas ſome object, that they are not ſenſible of any ill motions occaſioned in them, by being Spectators or Actors in ſuch *Saltations*; we are not bound to believe all which ſome pretend concerning their own Mortification. But ſuppoſe it were ſo, if there be other perſons, who are by *Mixt Dancing* drawn into ſin; that's enough againſt it. And that many are ſo, *Juvenal's* Verſes are a ſufficient proof

Forſitan expectes ut [*Gaditana*] *canoro*
Incipiat prurire choro, plauſuq; probatæ.

And that of *Horace*, *Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos Matura Virgo, & Fingitur Artibus, jam nunc & inceſtos amores, &c.*

2. Beſides the ſeventh Commandment, *There are other Scriptures, which ſeem expreſly and particularly to condemn the Dancing we plead againſt.* It is ſpoken of as the great ſin of the Daughters of *Sion*, that they did walk with ſtretched-out necks, and with wanton eyes, *walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet*, Iſa. 3. 16. Thoſe great Interpreters *Junius*, and *Rivet*, and *Ravanellus*, conceive, that Scripture hath a ſpecial reſpect to thoſe artificial and proud carriages which are learned in the *Dancing School*. And the holy Apoſtle *Paul* condemns *Rioting* as a vice, *Rom.* 13. 13. The original word Critical and Accurate Expoſitors Interpret, as reflecting on *Petulant Dancings*. And another Apoſtle ſpeaks not only of *Exceſs in Wine*

Wine, but of *Revelling*, as a Sin which the Gentiles before their Converſion to Chriſt, were generally guilty of, 1 *Pet.* 4.3. The word tranſlated *Revelling*, may be read *Dancing*. It is the ſame with that in the *Romans*, which our tranſlation calls *Rioting*. The learned *Aretius* comments thus upon it; *By* Κωμος, *he intends wanton Dancing, and ſo it is fitly mentioned after that of* Exceſs in Wine, *becauſe it was cuſtomary with the Gentiles, after they had been drinking to Exceſs, to fall to dancing and ſinging; and commonly their Songs were profane and obſcene.* Thus he, And indeed, as *Ravanellus* and *Voetius* have well obſerved: the Greek word Κωμος (which our Tranſlators call *Rioting*, and in *Peter*, *Revelling*) is by the moſt learned in the Greek Tongue, judged to intend *Dancing*. Thus *Heſychius* ſaith, that it is Εἶδος ὀρχήσεως And it is evident, that *Pindar*, the Greek Poet, doth ſo uſe the word. He ſaith, Καμάζε σὺν ὕμνῳ i. e. *Salta cum Hymno.* Vid. *Zuinger. Theatr. Vol.* 2. lib. 5. p. 389.

The ſumme is, that according to the judgment of the moſt profound and accu-

Interpreters; the Scripture does expreſly, and by name condemn *Dancing* as a vicious practice. The argument ſtands thus, Κωμοι are expreſly condemned in the Scripture: But mixt *Dancings* are Κωμοι, Therefore they are expreſly condemned in the Scripture. Alſo under that of *Chambring*, *Wantoneſs*, *laſcivouſneſs* Dancings are implied.

3. *There are many other Scriptures which do implicitly condemn them as ſinful.* How often does the Scripture commend unto Chriſtians, *Gravity* and *Sobriety*, in their behaviour at all times; and condemn all *Levity* in Carriage. When as *Dancing* is (as ſome have expreſſed it) a *Regular Madneſs*. That wiſe Prince *Alphonſus*, after he had ſeen ſuch things, the queſtion being asked, What is the difference between a *Dancer* and a *Mad-man*? Replied; *There was no other difference, but only this; that the perſon who is really* Phrentick, *is mad all the day long; when as the Dancer is only mad an hour in a day perhaps.* *Lud. Vives* tells a pleaſant ſtory of certain men, who coming out of *Aſia* into *Spain*, when they ſaw the *Spaniards* dance, they were ſo affrighted, as to run away, ſuppoſing them

to be poſſeſſed with ſome Spirit, or mad at leaſt. And truly ſuch affected Levity, and Antick Behaviour, when perſons skip and fling about like *Bedlams*, as they ſay, *Dancers* are wont to do; is no way becoming the Gravity of a Chriſtian. Moreover, the Scripture ſaith, *Whatſoever things are of good report*, think of theſe, *Phil.* 4. 8. which implieth, that Chriſtians ought to avoid things of evil report. But *Promiſcuous Dancings* are ſo; & that not only amongſt ſerious Chriſtians, but even amongſt the Gentiles. Their grave and wiſe men have branded that cuſtom as vile, infamous, and abominable; whoſe words we ſhall hear anon. But therefore that Rule which ſaith, meddle not with things of bad report, forbids Chriſtians to have any concernment with *Promiſcuous Dancings*. Yet again the Scripture ſaith, *Give no offence, neither to the Jew, nor to the Gentile, nor to the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 32. In indifferent things this precept takes place; but the impleaded *Dancing* is very offenſive upon more accounts than one, as will afterwards appear.

Arg.

Arg. 2. *If we conſider, by whom this practice of Promiſcuous Dancing was firſt invented by whom patronized, and by whom witneſſed againſt, we may well conclude, that the admitting of it, in ſuch a place as* New-England, *will be a thing pleaſing to the Devil, but highly provoking to the Holy God.*

We deſign to write as comprehenſively as we can; and have therefore in this Argument put ſeveral things together, the particulars whereof we ſhall endeavour to clear.

1. *Who were the Inventors of Petulant Dancings?* They had not their original amongſt the People of God, but amongſt the Heathen. Learned men have well obſerved, that the Devil was the firſt inventor of the impleaded *Dances*, and the Gentiles, who worſhiped him, the firſt Practitioners in this Art. They did honour the Devils, whom they ſerved in this way; their Feſtivals being for the moſt part ſpent in Play and Dances. And from them did the Apoſtatizing Idolatrous *Iſraelites* learn to behave themſelves, as they did, when they worſhip-

worſhipped the Golden Calf. *They ſat down, to eat and drink, and roſe up to play*, or to dance. 1 *Cor.*7. 10. Hence amongſt the Greeks, *Bacchus* was ſtiled Διὸς χορευς the God that loved Dancing. Their manner was, that a Company of Young Men and Women, with Muſical Inſtruments, would Dance and Sing together, in honour of *Bacchus*; whom alſo they called by the name of Κωμος which (as before was ſhewed) does from thence ſignifie *Dancing*. vid. *Alting Theol. Problem. Loc.* 10. *p.* 510. Nor is it to be wondred that thoſe miſerably deluded Souls, who thought and taught, that their Gods were Adulterers, did ſuppoſe that they would be delighted with ſuch Dances; as had a tendency that way, yea, the Gentiles took ſuch pleaſure in Dancing, that they learned ſome irrational Creatures that fooliſh Art. In ſpecial (as *Strabo in lib.* 13. relates) they taught *Apes* to Dance. When *Diana's* Feſtival was celebrated, *Dancing Apes* were brought forth to honour it. This is enough to make Chriſtians, not only deride, but deteſt ſuch Vanities; eſpecially conſidering that the Scriptures

ture ſaith, *Learn not the way of the Heathen.* Jer. 10. 2. And that the Lords People may *not do after their manners*, nor imitate their Heatheniſh Cuſtomes, *Lev.* 20. 23. And that Chriſt came to redeem Believers from their *vain Converſation*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. And that they ſhould not *be conformed to this world*, Rom. 12. 2.

A practice in uſe, only amongſt the Heathen, but never known among the people of God, except in times of degeneracy, ought not to be taken up. But this is true of that practice, which we now teſtify againſt.

2. *By whom have Promiſcuous Dances been patronized?* Truly, by the worſt of the Heathen. *Caligula*, *Nero*, and ſuch like Atheiſts and Epicures were delighted in them. *Lucius* (that infamous Apoſtate) hath written an Oration, in defence of profane and Promiſcuous Dancings. Amongſt the Papiſts, ſome of their more grave Writers, decry ſuch a practice as a great Immorality. *Alexander Fabritius*, a Learned Man, though Popiſhly affected, was indeed clearly convinced of the great ſin which is therein. His words are worthy our taking

king notice of them; he thus expreſſeth himſelf. *The entring into the Proceſſions of Dances, hinders men from ingreſs into the heavenly Proceſſion; and thoſe who Dance, offend againſt the Sacraments of the Church. Firſt, againſt Baptiſm; They break the Covenant which they made with God in Baptiſm; wherein they promiſed, to renounce the Devil and his Pomps; but when they enter into the Dance, they go in the Pompous Proceſſion of the Devil.* Thus that Author: But generally, Popiſh Caſuiſts juſtify it, as they do many other moral evils; ſo *Cajetan Azorius*, *Silveſter*, and other Papiſts: The corrupt Schoolmen makes a light matter of it, calling it a *Venial Sin*: And therefore *Lavater* does juſtly upbraid the Popiſh Religion, in that their Writers do generally maintain the lawfulneſs of *Promiſcuous Dancings*. So that the Patrons of this Practice are men not *ſound in the Faith.*

3. *Who are they that have faithfully teſtified againſt this practice?* Ignorant and Profane Men ſay, no body is againſt it, but a few ſilly Preciſians, who are more preciſe than wiſe. But we certainly know, that

that the wiſeſt, and the learnedeſt, and the holieſt men in the world have diſliked it. *The Antient Doctors*, (Fathers as they are called) have thundred againſt this Sin. *Chryſoſtom* in his Sermons on *Geneſis*, treating on *Jacob's* Marriage; *Here* (ſaith he) *We read of a Wedding, but not a word of Dancing there.* Yea, he ſticks not to call *Dancing* a *Diabolical Practice.* And in another of his Sermons; He ſaith, that *Wherever there is a Petulant Dance, the Devil is one of the Company.* And *Arnobius* does vehemently reprehend the Gentiles, becauſe of their laſcivious Dances. *Auſtin* doth ſeverely tax this vice. *Ambroſe* doth adviſe all Godly Parents, that would not have the Souls of their Children corrupted and ruined, not to ſend them to the Dancing-School. And how often do the Fathers call the *Dance* a *Work of Satan, one of his Pomps and Vanities, which all baptized perſons are bound to renounce?* And not only Fathers, but whole *Councils* have born witneſs againſt them. So did the *Oecumenical* Synod at *Conſtantinople.* Alſo the Synod which met at *Laodicea*, and

ſeveral

ſeveral others, abſolutely prohibit all Promiſcuous Dancings, not allowing them ſo much, as at Weddings. Thus it was with Chriſtians, before the World did degenerate again into Paganiſh, Heatheniſh Cuſtoms. We have now heard the ordinance of Antiquity diſcharged againſt the impleaded Dancers. *A* Shower of Arrows are yet behind.

As for *the great Reformers of Religion, and Oppoſers of Antichriſtianiſm*, none have gone beyond them, in an Holy Zeal againſt Profane and Promiſcuous Dancing. Let us in the firſt place, cite the *Waldenſes*: They are in the Scripture, honoured with the name of *Saints*, Rev. 13. 7. Theſe *Saints of God*, and *Martyrs of Jeſus*, were haters of Mixt Dances. Becauſe their words are Pathetical; we ſhall here tranſcribe and inſert them, as we find them mentioned by *Perrin*, in his Hiſtory of the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the *Waldenſes*, p. 63. They thus teſtify: *A Dance is the Devils Proceſſion. He that enters into a* Dance, *enters into his Poſſeſſion. The* Devil *is the Guide, the middle and the end of the* Dance. *A man ſinneth in*

Dancing

Dancing *divers wayes; as in his Pace, for all his ſteps are numbred; in his Touch, in his Ornaments, in his Hearing, ſight, Speech, and other Vanities. We will prove firſt from Scripture, and then by other Reaſons, how wicked a thing it is to* Dance.---*He that Danceth, maintaineth the Devil's Pomp, and ſingeth his Maſs. Again, In a Dance, a man breaks the Ten Commandments of God. The very motion of the Body, which is uſed in Dancing, giveth Teſtimony enough of evil.* Auſtin *ſaith, The miſerable Dancer knoweth not, that as many Paces as he makes in Dancing, ſo many ſteps he makes to Hell.* Thus (and much more to this purpoſe) do thoſe faithful Witneſſes of Chriſt, declare againſt this Profane Practice. Moreover, the Miniſters of the *Reformed Churches in France*, did above an hundred years ago, (*viz. Anno* 1581.) concur in writing, and publiſhing a Book, againſt the vice we are impleading. Alſo Venerable *Calvin*, *Marlorat*, *Lavater*, *Danæus*, *Tilenus*, *Polanus*, *Zepperus*; all condemn it as utterly unlwawful. *Peter Martyr* and *Aretius* in their common places, do elaborately diſcourſe about

bout mixed Dancing, and prove it to be an unlawful Recreation. The Judicious *Rivet* ſaith, that ſuch Dancings as teach wantonneſs in looks, or pride in behaviour, as he thinks almoſt all the *Saltations* do, which are now adayes Artificially learned in the *Dancing-Schools*, are breaches of the ſeventh Commandment, and ought not to be tolerated in any Chriſtian Common-wealth. The great *Voetius* hath lately, and (according to his wonted manner) with very much learning and ſtrength of reaſon, proved that ſuch Exerciſes are very ſinful. The like has been done by the Excellent *Altingius*. Amongſt our *Engliſh* Divines there is *a cloud of Witneſſes*. There are three *Biſhops* who have written againſt Promiſcuous *Dancing* as unlawful; ſo Dr. *Downham*, *Babington* and *Andrews*, and one *Arch-Biſhop* (tho we confeſs a Puritanical one) *viz.* the incomparable *Uſher*, hath given his Teſtimony againſt Vanities of this kind. Beſides theſe Dr. *Rainold*, Dr. *Ames*, Mr. *Perkins*. Mr. *Dod*, Mr. *Elton*, Mr. *Bolton*, Mr. *Brinſley*, Mr. *Durham* and others have abundantly proved it to be unlawful. Alſo Mr. *Prin*

has in his *Histrio Mastix*, a large discourse on this subject. Whoso shall please to read him, will find that good men have been very severe in their censure on *Dancers*. He will there see it affirmed, that *mixed Dancing is a Recreation fitter for Pagans & whores & Drunkards than for Christians*: And that the Gate of Heaven is too strait for a *Chore* of impure Dancers to enter in thereat: & that such *Capring Goats* will not be found amongst Sheep at the last Day, with many the like severe expressions. So odious was this practice Practice in former times, when Debauchery and Atheism had not obtained that Credit which this Adulterous Generation has put upon it.

Arg. 3. *That Practice which the Graver sort of Heathen have condemned as unlawful, Christians may well look upon as Sinful*, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *But this is true concerning mixed Dancing*; as shall by Testimony be made to appear.

Macrobius informs us, that amongst the Antient *Romans* skil in Dancing was reputed an infamous thing. *Scipio Africanus* complains that some in his time would go with

with *impudent Dancers* (as he calls them) and learn to ſing with them, Which practice their Anceſtors looked upon as a diſgrace to Gentlemen. He therefore ſpeaks of it as a great degeneracy of that Age, that ſome being Perſons of Quality, ſent their Children to a Dancing-ſchool, and that he had himſelf ſeen at one of their Schools, a Boy of twelve years old Dancing, which he thought was a fitter employment for a lewd and fooliſh ſerving-boy, than for the Son of a Gentleman. And *Saluſt* (that brave *Roman* Hiſtorian) layeth it as a Brand of Infamy upon *Sempronia*, that ſhe had been taught to *Dance*, which he ſays was a ſign of diſhoneſty; ſuch a practice being *the inſtrument of Luxury*. And *Cicero* in his Oration *Pro Muræna* ſaith, that if a Man be a *Dancer*, he is doubtleſs either a Drunkard or a mad man. *Nemo ſaltat ſobrius niſi forte inſaniat*. He blames *Cato* for having ſuch hard thoughts of *Muræna*, as to ſuppoſe him guilty of *Dancing*. For (ſaith he) if he be a *Dancer*, without doubt he is a bad man indeed, ſince that Vice never goeth alone. He ſaith of *Gabinius* and *Antonius* that they

muſt needs be vicious perſons, becauſe they were *Dancers*. *Seneca* bewails it, that in his time young Ones were corrupted with *Obſcene Dances*; and that *Dancing-ſchools* were to'e a ed in the City, and that ſome when they were inflamed at the *Dance*, went from the *Dancing-ſchool* to the *Brothel houſe*. *Priamus* ſeverely reproved his ſons becauſe he underſtood they were ὀρχησταὶ i. e. *Dancers*, *Plutarch* in his Deſcription of a Vertuous Woman, mentions this as a Negative qualification, that ſhe muſt not be a Dancer. Underſtand him and the other Authors cited, as ſpeaking of Promiſcuous *Dances*. The Emperor *Tiberius* baniſhed *Dancers*, not only from his Court, but out of the City of *Rome*.

Now then, ſhall the *Gentiles*, who had only the dark Light of Nature to ſhew them what things are good & what evil; condemn *Petulant dancings*? And ſhall Chriſtians who have the Scriptures and the Glorious Light of the Goſpel to illuminate them, practiſe or plead for ſuch works of Darkneſs? And ſhall that *Abomination* be ſet up in *New-England* (the place where the Light of the Goſpel

Goſpel has ſhined ſo Gloriouſly) which *Moral Heathen* have deteſted? The Lord lay not this great ſin to the charge of any, who have at all been guilty of it.

Arg. 4. *The practice which is not ſanctified by Prayer, but is an Enemy to Religious Exerciſes, is ſurely an evil Practice. But this is true concerning mixt dancing.* It is a good Rule which *Practical and Caſuiſtical* Divines are wont to give, *That work which a Man cannot pray over, let him not meddle with.* A Chriſtian ſhould do nothing wherein he cannot exerciſe Grace, or put a reſpect of Obedience to God on what he does. This in lawful Recreations may be done. 1 *Cor.* 10 31, But who can ſeriouſly pray to the Holy God, to be with him when he is going to a Promiſcuous *dance*? It is that which hinders Religious Exerciſes, eſpecially for perſons to go immediately from hearing a Sermon to a *Gunecandrical Dance.* It is an high degree of profaneneſs, an impudent contempt put upon the Goſpel. The Devil thereby catcheth away the good ſeed of the Word, and the former Religious Exerciſe *is* rendered ineffectual. Some that write againſt

dances

dances, obſerve, that many young perſons who ſeemed to be hopeful, and to have ſome good beginnings of Piety in them, by falling into acquaintance with that unlawful Recreation, have in a little time utterly left all ſavour of good; it being juſt with God, when they have forſaken him to follow the Devils Pomps and Vanities, to withdraw his Holy Spirit from them, and judicially give them up to mind nothing elſe but Folly. The Lord grant that none amongſt our ſelves may find the obſervation true.

Arg. 5. *For Perſons to Dance at a Time when God calls them to mourn, is certainly unlawful. But ſuch is the caſe at this Day.* If the thing were in it ſelf lawful (which the Arguments inſiſted on prove that it is not) yet to ſet upon ſuch a practice at ſuch a time, muſt needs be a great provocation to the ſight of God. *Dancers* are wont to alledge that Scripture, *Eccl.* 3. 4. *There is a Time to Dance*, (though that does not ſpeak a ſyllable for the Juſtification of ſuch *Dancing* as we are writing againſt, nor indeed for any other *Dancing*, ſince the meaning of the place is not that there is a *lawful time*, but only a *limited time* to *Dance*.) But they ſhould conſider that *There is a Time to mourn.* Now to ſet up *Dances* at a Time when Gods calls to mourn, is moſt certainly a provocation. There was a Time when God by his Prophet ſaid, *Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye Women, and teach your daughters wailing*

ing, Jer. 9. 20. And ſo does he ſpeak by his providence at this day: But at a Time when God ſaith, *Teach your Daughters wailing*, ſhall we ſay *no, We will teach them Dancing?* There is a woe pronounced upon them that are at eaſe in Sion, and who at a ſeaſon when they ſhould be grieved for the Affliction of *Joſeph*, are *Chanting to the ſound of the Viol, Amos* 6. 5. Every body knows that it is a time of much Affliction with the Church of God in the World. They that begin a *Dance* now, give but a poor evidence of their belonging to the Myſtical Body of Chriſt, when they do no more ſympathize with its ſorrow. Is this a Time for *Jigs* and *Galiards*! Let us recommend to ſuch perſons the ſerious Conſideration of that Scripture, *Iſa.* 22. 12, 13, 14. *In that Day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping and to mourning. And behold Joy and Gladneſs, Let us Eat and Drink, for to morrow we ſhall Die. It was revealed in mine Ears by the Lord of Hoſts, ſurely this Iniquity ſhall not be purged from you till you Die, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* The Judgments of God are abroad in the World, and hanging over our own heads too. *Should we then make Mirth? Ezek.* 21. 10. Bleſſed Mr. *Cotton*, tho he be dead (and hath been ſo 33. years) yet ſpeaketh. He hath left behind him this Teſtimony (in his Book on *Eccl.* 3. 4.) *To Dance though at Marriages is unmeet, eſpecially in* N. E. *And at ſuch a Time as this, when the Churches are in*

Diſtreſs.

Diſtreſs. Should he riſe out of his Tomb (which is here amongſt us) how would his Holy Soul be grieved to behold ſuch Degeneracy in this *Boſton.*

Arg. 6. *That Practice againſt which the wrath of God hath been revealed from Heaven, may well be dreaded as unrighteous.* Rom. 1. 18. *But this is ſadly true concerning mixt Dancings.* The Fruits and Effects thereof have been Tragical & Diſmal. No doubt but that the *Promiſcuous Dances* (for at their Sacrifices the Heathen uſed to do ſo) between the *Moabites* and the *Midianitiſh* Woman, proved a ſnare to the Children of *Iſrael.* But how terrible a Plague followed? *Rivet, Ravanellus* and others conclude that *Dinah* went to ſee a *Dance* among the *Shechemites*; if her good Father had not indulged her that liberty, he had ſaved her from Ruine, and himſelf and Family from great Reproach. *Salome*, the Daughter of *Herodias* was notable at *Dancing*! But what end did ſhe come to? *Nicephorus* relates that falling under the Ice, her feet *Capered* under the water; and her Head being cut off by the Ice, it danced above water. The Story of that Biſhop is famous, who having a Mixed Dance in his Houſe, he and the female in his hand hapned to be cruſh'd to Death. Alſo in the City of *Magdeburg.* 24. Perſons (Men and Women) were ſtruck dead with the Lightnings as they were *Promiſcuouſly Dancing.* See Dr. *Beards*

Theater of Judgments, Chap. 36. Hereby may we underſtand that ſuch Men were provoked the Lord, *Numb.* 16. 30. Hiſtories have many other tragical ſtories confirming this Argument, which we forbear to mention. It is known from their own Confeſſions that amongſt the *Indians* in this *America*, oftentimes at their *Dances* the Devil appears in bodily ſhape, and takes away one of them alive. In ſome places of this Wilderneſs there are great heaps of Stones, which the *Indians* have laid together, as an horrid Remembrance of ſo hideous a fruit of their *Satanical Dances*. The Writer of *Magica de Spectris*, obſerves, That there was hardly any meeting betwixt the Devil and Witches wherein there was no *Dancing*.

But let us hear what the Patrons of Dances have to plead. *Produce your Cauſe, and bring forth your ſtrong Reaſons, ſaith the Lord.* Say all that you have to ſay.

Plea. 1. *We Read in the Scripture of* Dances; *Miriam Danced*, and *David Danced*.

Anſw. 1. Thoſe Inſtances are not at all to the purpoſe; for they were Religious *Dances*, accommodated to the State of the Old Teſtament-Church. They had alſo Muſick in their worſhip, but ſuch as have ſo in theſe dayes *Judaize* more than *Chriſtians* ought to do, we ſhould divert into another *Queſtion*, ſhould we ſpeak to that.

2. Neither

2. Neither were thoſe mentioned, *Mixed dancings*: It is ſaid of *Miriam*, *The Woman went out after her with Dances*, *Exod.* 15. 20. But not that Men went out with them: Nor did *David* take a Woman by the hand to *Dance* with him before the Ark. In one Word, there is not ſo much as one Example in the whole Book of God concerning *mixt dancing*, except it be the Inſtance of that accurſed and damned Harlot the Daughter of *Herodias*.

Plea. 2. *The Deſign of Dancing is only to teach Children good Behaviour and decent Carriage.*

Anſ. Religion is no Enemy to good Manners, to learn a due Poyſe and Compoſure of Body is not unlawful, provided it be done without a provocation to Uncleanneſs, and be not a Nurſe of Pride and Vanity. If therefore any be diſpoſed to have their Children inſtructed in that which may be truely Ornamental; or a deſireable Accompliſhment in theſe reſpects, they may ſend them not to a Blaſphemer, but to ſome Grave Perſon that will teach them Decency of Behaviour, not *Promiſcuouſly*, but each Sex by themſelves; ſo neither God nor Man will be offended.

This notwithſtanding, Every thing is not *Good Carriage*; which Light and Vain Perſons ſhall call ſo. Why ſhould *Pantomimical Geſtures* be named good Carriage. There is a behaviour which

which Light Perſons look upon as an accompliſhment; but ſuch as are grave and ſolid, and wiſe (whoſe eſteem is moſt to be valued) have other thoughts of it.. If the Holy Prophet *Iſaiah* were alive in theſe dayes, he would not call a *ſtretched forth neck, and wanton eye, a Mincing as they go*, by the name of good carriage. It is one of the Devil's Wiles to Guild over corrupt Practices with Golden Names, that men may the more eaſily ſwallow them. In this debauched Age; frequent *Oſculations* amongſt thoſe that are not in any Conjugal Relation, is called good Breeding, Gentile behaviour, and the like. But Chriſtians ought to hate ſuch tendencies to *Nicolaitiſm*, for Chriſt hates them, *Rev.* 2. 6.

Plea 3. *Children are much pleaſed with this Exerciſe.* Anſ. That we believe: But if it ſuit with their corrupt natures, that's a ſign it is evil. No doubt but that if a Stage play were ſet up, many Children would be as much pleaſed with it, as now they are with the Dance. If a Blaſphemer ſhall tell them, There's as good Divinity to be learned by a Play as by the Scripture it ſelf, perhaps they may be debauched into the belief of it, if ever they ſhould ſee Scripture-ſtories acted in a Play, which indeed is a profane Practice common amongſt the Papiſts, but prohibited in Reformed Churches under pain of the higheſt cenſure. The Lord ſaith, *Seek not after your own heart and your own wayes*, after which

which you uſe to go an whoring, *Numb.* 15. 35.

Plea. 4. *Such dancing is now become cuſtomary amongſt Chriſtians. Anſ.* Which cannot be thought on without horror. A great and Learned Divine takes notice of it as a very ſad thing, that all the profane Dances in uſe amongſt the Laſcivious Greeks of Old, have of late years been revived in the Chriſtian World; yea, and in Places where the Reformed Religion has taught men better. But ſhall Chriſtians follow the courſe of the World? They ought to ſwim againſt the ſtream, and to keep themſelves pure from the ſins of the Times of which this of *mixed dancing* is none of the leaſt.

Plea. 5. *Some good men think it is lawful! Anſ.* We are not to walk by the Opinion of this or that good Man, but by the Scriptures. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to that there is no light in them.* Fearful Judgments have befallen a Profeſſing People for doing ſuch things as ſome good Men through error of Judgment have approved of. We dare not deny, that there have been ſome good Men in the world, who have been ſo far miſled as to juſtify Profanations of the Lords Day. And *Lutherans* have pleaded for Graven Images, contrary to the ſecond Commandment. But ſhould ſuch things be tolerated in *N. E.* we have reaſon to believe that the hot diſpleaſure of God would ſoon burn againſt us. Beſides,

it

it is more than we know, if one good man hath written in defence of mixt Dancings. One that hath written againſt Dancers, giveth his Book this Title, *The Church of ungodly Men and Women whoſe King is Lucifer.* But we cannot call to mind one Proteſtant Author who has been real for the intereſt of Reformation, that has ſet his Pen on work to plead for a practice ſo vile and infamous. This Objection turns upon Dancers thus, That practice with Holy Men in all ages have abhorred may well be ſuſpected to be an evil practice: But it was ſhewed that this is true of promiſcuous Dancing. We ſhall then conclude this Diſcourſe with a double *Corollary.*

Corol. 1. *It is the Duty of Churches to exerciſe the Diſcipline of Chriſt towards ſuch of their Members as ſhall offend in this matter.* The Rule is clear and written with the Beams of the Sun, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6. *We command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you withdraw your ſelves from every Brother that walketh diſorderly, and not after the Tradition which he received from us.* Now they that frequent Promiſcuous Dancings, or that ſend their Children thereunto, walk diſorderly, and contrary to the Apoſtles Doctrine. It has been proved that ſuch a practice is a *Scandalous Immorality,* and therefore to be removed out of Churches by Diſcipline, which is the Broom of Chriſt, whereby he keeps his Churches clean. *Zepperus* and others ob-

obſerve that it was by this means, that Churches in the Primitive times were preſerved from this corruption. And thus it hath been in the Reformed Churches. The National Synod held at *Dort*, Anno 1578. thus expreſs themſelves, *Becauſe Dances are for the moſt part attended with a Levity unbecoming Chriſtians, and are an offence to the Godly, eſpecially when practiſed in a time of common Danger and Calamity, they that go to Dances, ſhall be reproved, and if after divers Admonitions they perſiſt therein, they are to be excluded from Communion.* And ſeveral Provincial Aſſemblies in *Holland*, have declared that the ſword of Diſcipline ought to be brandiſhed again ſuch Offenders, as *Voetius* teſtifieth (*In Diſput, de excelſis mundi*, p.346, 347.) And the *Reforming Synods* in *Poland* above an hundred years ago, did abſolutely prohibit theſe Dances, and preſcribe the uſe of Diſcipline againſt that evil: Once more in the printed Diſcipline of the Reformed Churches in *France*, p. 45. They have this Article, *Dancing is to ſuppreſſed, and thoſe that take the liberty or cuſtom to Dance after they have been ſeveral times Admoniſhed ſhall be Excommunicated, when they ſhew themſelves obſtinate in their Rebellion. And the Conſiſtories are exhorted well to put this Article into Execution, and to read the ſame publickly in the Name of God, and in the Authority of the Synods, and the ſaid Synods and Conferences are exhorted to take heed of and warn*

thoſe

thoſe Conſiſtories that therein do not their Duties, to cenſure the Offenders for it.

And ſhall Churches in *N. E.* who have had a Name to be ſtricter and purer than other Churches, ſuffer ſuch a ſcandalous evil amongſt them? if all that are under Diſcipline be made ſenſible of this matter, we ſhall not be much or long infeſted with a *Choreutical Dæmon.*

Corol. 2. *Such Church-Members in* N. E. *as have ſent their Children to be Practitioners or Spectators of mixt Dancing between young Men and Maidens, have cauſe to be deeply humbled.* But ſtand ſtill a while! what a word is here! *Church-Members and their Children in* N. E. *at mixt Dances! Be aſtoniſhed O ye Heavens!* without doubt *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Iſrael knoweth us not.* If our Fathers ſhould riſe out of their Graves, they would not own ſuch Children. It has been obſerved by ſeveral learned & holy Men that *Job* giveth it as the Deſcription and Character of ungodly ones: *They ſend forth their little ones like a Flock, and their Children Dance, they take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organs,* Job 21. 11,12. Mr. *Caryls* note on thoſe words is, *That worldly men breed their Children vainly.* This is all their Religion. The Catechiſm which Wicked men teach their Children is to Dance and to Sing. Not that Dancing, or Muſick, or Singing are in themſelves ſinful: but if the Dancing Maſter be wick-

ed

they are commonly abuſed to laſciviouſneſs, and that makes them to become abominable. But will you that are Profeſſors of Religion have your Children to be thus taught? the Lord expects that you ſhould give the Children who are Baptized into his Name another kind of Education, that you ſhould bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: And do you not hear the Lord Expoſtulating the caſe with you, and ſaying, you have taken my Children, the Children that were given unto me; the Children that were ſolemnly engaged to renounce the Pomps of Satan; but is this a light matter that you have taken theſe my Children, and initiated them in the Pomps and Vanities of the Wicked one, contrary to your Covenant? What will you ſay in the day of the Lords pleading with you? we have that charity for you as to believe that you have erred through Ignorance, and not wickedly: and we have therefore accounted it our Duty to inform you in the Truth. If you reſolve not on Reformation, you will be left inexcuſable. However it ſhall be, we have now given our Teſtimony and delivered our own Souls. *Conſider what we ſay, and the Lord give you underſtanding in all things.*

FINIS.